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**SCHAKOWSKY ASKS: □ □
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DANGEROUS CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS BEFORE CONGRESS RESPONDS?**

CHICAGO, IL - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), a leading Congressional advocate for strengthening federal regulations governing pre-market testing and safety standards of children's products, today joined Kids In Danger in releasing "*Hazards of Child's Play: Children's Product Recalls in 2004.*"

□ □ The report, which was released one day after the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) levied a \$4 million against Graco Children's Product Inc for dangerous products, states:

Without more stringent regulation by the government, dangerous children's products will continue to be sold by all manufacturers and recalls continue to go unnoticed by many, compromising the safety of our children. In 2000 and 2001, children's product recalls comprised over 50% of the total number of recalls; however, 2003 and 2004 have seen that number drop by 20 points to 31%. "How many more reports," Schakowsky asked, "must be released about dangerous children's products before Congress responds? □ How many more recalls must be issued before Congress strengthens federal regulations so that dangerous children's products never make it into our homes, childcare centers, and pre-schools in the first place?"

Schakowsky said that federal legislation is needed because there are no mandatory safety standards for the majority of children's products being sold today and because Congress passed legislation in 1981 that prohibits the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the agency that oversees product safety, from establishing mandatory standards in most cases. □ Schakowsky announced her plans to reintroduce the Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act, legislation that would require infant and toddler products to receive a federal seal of approval before they are sold. □ The seal would demonstrate that those products had been independently tested and had met required national safety standards.

Schakowsky pointed to yesterday's \$4 million civil penalty levied by the CPSC against Graco, one of the nation's leading and trusted children's product manufacturers, as a

prime example of how unsafe children's products are sold to unsuspecting parents without adequate pre-market testing.[] The Graco products that posed a danger to children, including certain infant swings and strollers, would have had to meet national safety standards under Schakowsky's bill.

"It is clear that the current regiment does not work - it leaves our children in danger.[] Children's products are tested in our own homes, with our children and grandchildren as test dummies.[] The cost of those tests can be a panicked child, bruised fingers, a near-strangulation, fractured skulls, or a dead child.[] My legislation would guarantee that no swing, baby carrier or crib is sold without first being tested and meeting national safety standards," Schakowsky said.

The Kids In Danger report found that *"The most common hazard in the products recalled in 2004 was risk of bodily injury.[] Bodily injury includes falling, laceration, and impact injuries.[] Out of 90 children's product recalls, 39 of them were due to risk of bodily injury."*

"Unintended injuries are the leading cause of death for children under the age of four, and many of these deaths are a result of unsafe products.[] Congress has a moral obligation to protect the life of every child because a child who is injured, disabled or dies as a result of an untested, unsafe product is a one child too many.[] Unless, and until, the Republican leadership in Congress makes child safety a top priority, kids will remain in danger," she said.

According to *"Hazards of Child's Play: Children's Product Recalls in 2004"*: Graco led the list of recalls with the most reported injuries.[] With the recall of the Travel-Lite Swing, Graco did not differentiate between incidents and injuries, but it is clear that most of the reports involved injuries - up to 128. Graco's Travel Lite Swing, recalled in 2004, had 128 failure incidents before being recalled. Graco was recently fined for failure to report possible hazards with many of their products.[] According to the recall notice sent out by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the handle on this swing can come out of place and hit the child on the head.[] Also, the seat belt can fail to sufficiently restrict the child's movement to prevent them from falling forward and hitting their head on the swing. Schakowsky concluded, "Last year, I worked with my Republican colleagues to secure the first hearing on child product safety in Congress in years.[] I am hopeful that we can continue that spirit of cooperation and pass meaningful reforms this Congress."